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Linda McCulloch
Superintendent

DATE: January 3, 2007

TO: School Food Authority (SFA) Administrators

FROM: Christine Emerson, Director, School Nutrition Programs

SUBJECT: Determining Creditability of Breakfast Cereals for Traditional or Enhanced Menu Planning Approaches

This memo serves two purposes:

1. Reviews existing Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) guidance applicable to breakfast cereals; and
2. Provides an *additional* option to help determine if breakfast cereals are creditable if their packaging does not indicate they are "enriched" or "fortified" (either ready-to-eat or ready-to-cook).

Existing FNS Guidance

The *FCS Grains/Breads Instruction 783.1 Rev 2* and the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* (FBG), section three, provide current guidance on crediting of grains/breads products. The FBG is based on the *Grains/Breads Instruction* and provides several options to determine creditability of breakfast cereals. A breakfast cereal is creditable if any of the following are true:

- 1) the cereal is labeled as whole grain (100 percent of the grain component is whole grain);
- 2) the cereal is labeled as "enriched";
- 3) the cereal is labeled as "fortified";
- 4) the ingredient statement shows that the primary grain ingredient is either whole grain, enriched flour or meal, bran, or germ; or
- 5) manufacturer documentation provides the gram amount of creditable grains per serving.

New Problem with Crediting Breakfast Cereals

Some cereal manufacturers no longer attach the words "fortified" or "enriched" to the name of the cereal on the label. In addition, some cereal manufacturers are adding the words "whole grain" or "made with whole grain" to the product label even if the grain component is not 100 percent whole grain. This makes it difficult to determine if the cereal is creditable.

Another Option for Determining the Creditability of Breakfast Cereals

If the cereal label does not give enough information to determine if a cereal is creditable using the options mentioned above, you may use the nutrient criteria that FNS has established (hereafter referred to as FNS Nutrient Criteria for Breakfast Cereals) based on the minimum required amounts of selected nutrients in one slice of enriched bread. This nutrient profile is

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only intended to provide guidance for SFAs in determining if a breakfast cereal is a creditable grains/bread component of reimbursable meals served under food-based menu planning.

If a breakfast cereal is determined to be creditable using the *Grains/Breads Instruction* or the FBG options listed on page one of this memorandum, the cereal remains creditable even if the product does not meet any or all of the five nutrient criteria outlined in the following chart. It is expected that the FNS Nutrient Criteria for Breakfast Cereals will be used as a last option for determining credibility. If you need to use the FNS Nutrient Criteria for Breakfast Cereals to determine creditability, then the product must contain the minimum levels of all five nutrients (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, folic acid, and iron) listed.

FNS Nutrient Criteria for Breakfast Cereals Served to Children Ages One and Older					
Required Nutrient	Cereal Portion Size*		Minimum % Daily Value (%DV) of Nutrient per Portion*	or	Minimum Weight of Nutrient per Portion*
	Ready-to-Eat (whichever amount weighs less)	Ready-to-Cook			
Thiamin (B1)	1.0 ounce or 3/4 cup	25 grams dry	6.7 %	or	0.10 mg
Riboflavin (B2)	1.0 ounce or 3/4 cup	25 grams dry	3.5 %	or	0.06 mg
Niacin (B3)	1.0 ounce or 3/4 cup	25 grams dry	4.2 %	or	0.84 mg
Folic Acid (B9)	1.0 ounce or 3/4 cup	25 grams dry	5.0 %	or	20.0 mcg
Iron	1.0 ounce or 3/4 cup	25 grams dry	3.9 %	or	0.70 mg

* *It is important to note that the FNS Nutrient Criteria for Breakfast Cereals are set for specific portion sizes. The portion size for ready-to-eat breakfast cereals is one ounce **or** 3/4 cup, whichever amount weighs less. The portion size for cooked cereal is 25 grams of ready-to-cook, dry cereal regardless of the amount of cooked cereal served or the amount of liquid added to cook the cereal.*

*If the serving size on the Nutrition Facts Label matches the cereal portion size listed in the FNS Nutrient Criteria for Breakfast Cereals chart, then you can compare the nutrients listed on the Nutrition Facts Label to the FNS Nutrient Criteria for Breakfast Cereals. If the serving size does **not** match the cereal portion size listed in the FNS Nutrient Criteria for Breakfast Cereals chart, then you will need to convert the nutrient values from the label to determine the amount of nutrients in the required cereal portion size.*

If you have questions regarding these options for determining the creditability of breakfast cereals, please contact the School Nutrition Programs at (406) 444-2501.